

USSN: 09/812,034

Filing Date: March 19, 2001

REMARKS

Claims 30, 31, 53, 56-86 are pending in this application. Claims 30, 31, 53, 56-79 and 83-86 are allowed. Claims 76-78 and 80-82 are rejected. Claim 31 has been amended to correct a typographical error. Claim 60 has been amended to reflect proper dependency.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph

Claim 78 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement because the specification provides no support for such a limitation. Applicants submit that the backbone, involved in the optimization, may be modulated either rationally or manually. Applicant respectfully points to support in the Specification at beginning on page 10, line 9 through page 11, line 16 and page 13, lines 21-33, and that a person skilled in the art would understand the Applicants to have been in possession of the claimed invention at the time the application was filed. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added by the amendment. Applicant respectfully requests the reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 78, in light of the foregoing argument.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claims 76, 77, and 80-82 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the present invention. Claim 76 has been amended to recite, "said set" instead of "said list." The antecedent basis has been corrected by this Amendment thereby making Claim 76 and its dependent claim 77 definite and more clearly describing the claimed invention.

Claim 80 was rejected as being indefinite for reciting "wherein step (c) comprises a second group for a second variable position has a second set of at least two amino acid side chains." Claim 80 has been amended into independent form, now including the allowed original base claim that it depended from. Support for the amendment may be found in allowed claim 53 and claim 80 as originally filed and in the Specification at page 7, lines 18-26 and page 10, lines 5-30 and page 11, lines 9-16, page 14, lines 14-21 and page 18, lines 1-19.

Claims 81 and 82 have been amended to recite "said first and second sets of amino acid side chains," to reflect proper antecedent basis and to clarify the claim language.

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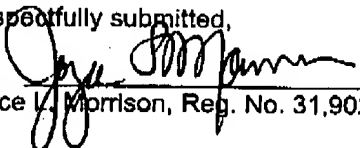
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 76, 77, and 80-82 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, in light of the above amendments.

The Applicants submit that in light of the above-amendment and argument, the claims are now in condition for allowance and an early notification of such is respectfully solicited.

Please direct any calls in connection with this application to the undersigned at (626) 737-8019.

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Respectfully submitted,

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